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ABSTRACT

Intramurals have been a part of elementary and secondary schools since the early part of this century. Intramurals are considered to be an important part of the educational process. Often many schools offer traditional intramural activities, such as basketball, softball, tennis, and volleyball. The purpose of this session is to present new and innovative intramural activities for elementary and secondary schools. Some activity examples include: air band contest, crazy tournaments, fun runs, game shows, giant relay, oatmeal pass, and many more. It is recommended that schools incorporate new and innovative ideas into their intramural programs to increase their student participation rate. (Author/JD)

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INTRAMURALS: NEW AND INNOVATIVE IDEAS FOR A SCHOOL PROGRAM

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Today, when students and teachers hear the word "intramurals", they often think volleyball, basketball, tennis, or another team or individual activity. Too often, many intramural programs are structured this way, offerring only traditional activities. If an intramural program only involves traditional activities, the following may occur: participation may be down; no one is interested in playing or officiating any sport; faculty members may not want to be involved; and other reasons. If an intramural program has these problems, innovative programming and special events may be needed.

Innovative means "to make alterations or changes to the already established intramural program. To introduce new and creative activities to the intramural program." Special indicates "something out of the ordinary" (Boulware, 1983). Creativity is perhaps the key to changing the intramural program. Add new activities or change old activities. The "real beauty of these events is that they can be tailored for any school" (Boulware, 1983).

When implementing special events to the intramural program, Burchard and Bonanno (1987) mentioned that a special event will be successful if four simple rules are followed:

1. Plan an event with which students can identify. (Choose a national event that the students understand and enjoy and scale it down to fit your particular circumstances. For example, schedule the wiffleball world series).

2. Secure the participation of as many different groups within the student body as possible. (Have groups such as, SGA, varsity athletic teams, PTA, etc., co-sponsor or endorse the event).
3. Be sure there is something planned for everyone who would like to participate. (Event should accomodate everyone by interest and skill levels).
4. Build-in the unusual and the extraordinary. (Stir the imagination).

Boulware (1983) also offers the following hints when implementing special events:

1. Use the slogan "Something For Everyone".
2. Promote and advertise the event.

   Tenoschok (1981) made the following recommendations for promoting intramural events:

   a. Intramural bulletin board - located in the gym area. Information includes: weekly schedules, team standings, upcoming events, and other information.
   b. Intramural posters - displayed by the intramural representative in each homeroom, includes information from the bulletin board.
   c. Intramural council - one student is elected to represent each homeroom. Meetings every two weeks. Discuss activity wants, needs, progress, and programming.
   d. Intramural newsletter - written by the students. It contains honors, events upcoming, etc.

e. Daily announcements - made school-wide in the morning.

f. Local newspaper articles - to stimulate student and parent interest.

Special events can fall into the following categories (Boulware, 1983): "traditional activity in new setting, nonintramural associated activity, co-op enterprises, trips and expeditions, special population apeealers, and the outrageous."

"Traditional Activity in New Setting"

According the Boulware (1983) this category includes traditional games with a twist or new rules. A marathon game (lasts the entire school day or into the weekend) in activities such as basketball or volleyball.

Spindt (1984) suggested that game rules be modified and fields or courts be shortened or lengthened. Some examples include:

-Football - 7 man flag football, 3-on-3 passing games on 20 x 50 yard field.

-Basketball - 3-on-3, 2-on-2, 1-on-1, free throw contest, change height of the baskets.

-Volleyball - 3-on-3, 2-on-2

-Softball - 1, 2, or 3 pitch

-Soccer - 5-on-5 on 20 x 50 field

-Ultimate frisbee

Karabetsos (1988) mentioned "Frenzy Football" as an event to add to an intramural program. This is modified co-ed flag

football. The changes include: passing anywhere on the field; on an incomplete pass the ball becomes dead from the point where the throw was made; offense has one series (four plays) to score; no rushing the quarterback; quarterback has five seconds to get rid of the ball; and offense is only allowed one huddle with each poss ession.

For tennis, have a game where you can only hit the ball after the second bounce. Tie a jump rope to partners rackets. Hit the tennis ball with the opposite hand.

Innertube waterpolo, innertube basketball, or water volleyball are games that could be incorporated if a swimming pool is available (Boulware, 1983).

Sport clubs could provide a program for the entire school. The students of these clubs could demonstrate their skills. These clubs include: karate, gymnastics, or fencing (Boulware, 1983).

Professional athletes or paid professionals in activities such as billiards, golf, or frisbee could be brought in for an entertaining program (Boulware, 1983).

Sport movies of the local high school, college, or professional teams could be shown to students. Tape your own intramural events and show them to the students. Dive-in movies such as Jaws, where students sit in innertubes in the pool could add to a program (Boulware, 1983).

"Nonintramural Associated Activity"

Events that do not revolve around sports could be added to the intramural program. An air band contest could be implemented. This is where students form a band and pretend to sing the songs that are being played over the stereo.

A special dance could be organized. Allow those that participated in intramurals to enter the dance free (Boulware, 1983).

An "Intramural Juice Bar" could take place at another school function. Mixed drinks are served minus the alcohol. (Boulware, 1983).

Take television shows or board games and put them into the intramural program. Make the game life-size. A Gong Show would fit in this category. Faculty and staff could be the judges for each act.

Tenoschok (1981) suggested sports contests. These included an essay contest, a sports quiz, a slogan contest, a drawing contest, a coloring contest, and an invent-a-game contest. Faculty members from all disciplines can be the judges for the contests. The first place entry in each category could win a free day in the gym after school. Tenoschok (1981) mentions "this technique promotes total school involvement in an activity fostering creativity and interdisciplinary efforts."

"Co-op Enterprises"

This category reaches a broad campus population. The intramural department could co-sponsor an activity with SGA,

newspaper staff, athletic department, PTA, or faculty. For example, the athletic department could sponsor the intramural free throw championship at the half-time of a basketball game (Boulware, 1983).

"Trips and Expeditions"

The outdoors could be used to sponsor special events. Canoeing, roller skating, or nature walk are some events that could be implemented into the intramural program (Boulware, 1983). The events in this area should be determined by the availability and proximity of adequate outdoor areas, in addition, the school administrator should approve these activities (Karabetsos, 1988).

"Special Population Appealers"

This category incorporates events or programs for all campus populations. A luncheon for faculty, staff, and parents could be sponsored by the intramural program. A Handicapped Awareness Day is an event that could bring the students, faculty, and staff closer together (Boulware, 1983).

Tenoschok (1981) suggested "Student-Faculty Games" follow an intramural team sport activity. The faculty could play against the top two intramural teams from each grade in that particular activity.

"The Outrageous"

This category includes all the crazy and fun ideas. Safety should be the most important item when creating activities for this category (Boulware, 1983).

Some activities include (Boulware, 1983):

-Plug-a-bug or Cram-a-van - see how many students can fit into a particular car.

-Hug-in (more appropriate for older students) - see how many hugs you can get in one day.

-Sleeping Bag exchange (More appropriate for older students) - One male and female are in a sleeping bag, toe-to-face and toe-to-face. They switch positions in the sleeping bag as fast as they can. The event is timed.

Another activity which will involve many students and promote physical fitness at the same time is the "Century Club" (Romance, 1986). The club is an honorary fitness organization where the students complete the exercises on their own and record them. The students gain membership into the club by completing 100 (does not have to be consecutive) repetitions or minutes of any designated exercise. The progress of each student is posted on the intramural bulletin board and rewarded with 100-increment certificates that are color-coded. The exercises included in the program were: sit-ups, push-ups, pull-ups, flexed-arm hang, running, swimming, biking, or walking. Maxes is another club which can be added after the Century Club has been implemented. This club requires maximum consecutive repetitions or minutes of

exercise. An adult records the scores for Maxes, while the student records the score for the Century Club (Romance, 1986).

Another activity is to "Run Across America". Students plot their mileage on a map. The 3rd grade could take on the 4th grade to see who runs across the nation first. Walking and swimming could also be utilized. "Swim the English Channel" or "Walk Across the North Pole". This activity incorporates geography as well as physical fitness (Tenoschok, 1981).

"Kickoff Week" could be implemented. This would be the first intramural event of the year. Use field day activities and have faculty members help coordinate and judge the events (Tenoschok, 1981).

Spindt (1984) has the following suggestions for different types of intramural activities:

-Motorcross - have the students build the racing course for the bikes.

-Turkey trot - sponsor around Thanksgiving and give the winner a turkey.

-Arm wrestling - organize by weight.

-Break dancing or any other type of dance that is popular at the time.

-Ping pong

-Paddle tennis

-Minature golf - have students design and build the course.

-Any type of super stars competition.

Karabetsos (1988) discussed the unorthodox track meet. Some events that can comprise this activity include:

#1. Ice breaker - team members are blindfolded and have to line up from the tallest to the shortest. (Can also have teams line up by birthdates, alphabetical order of first names, etc.).

#2. Sprint - each player has to sprint a designated distance by placing the heel of one foot in front of, and touching, the toes of the other foot. Can be done backwards.

#3. Standing Long Jump - First person leaps as far as possible. Next player assumes their position and jumps, etc. until all team members have participated. Team that jumps the furthest wins.

#4. Hurdles - Leap frog is played over a certain distance.

#5. Dash - Each person holds the right foot of the teammate in front of them while placing their left hand on his shoulder. Last person hops on one foot. Then sprint over 20 yards or some other distance.

Fun runs can fall under this category. Organize a run according to a holiday, ie: Halloween, have the students run in costumes over 1 mile. A sweetheart run for Valentines day, a midnight fun run, etc.

A giant relay could have one grade compete against another. Use the whole school, inside and outside. Set-up stations. The relay could start with the first person on each team running backwards for 100 yards. Next touch your teammates who play leap frog over 50 yards. Add other activities.

Oatmeal pass is another fun activity. The object is to pass oatmeal to your teammate. This is done by sitting back to back. One person has an empty bucket, the other a full bucket of oatmeal. A line of 5 persons could be used.

"Feed the Baby". Two people are blindfolded. There is a spoon and a bowl of applesauce. One person must feed the other.

Innovative programs and special events can add to an intramural program. The intramural coordinator should be creative and flexible when implementing these activities. Whatever events or activities are added, the priority for each should be fun, so that students and faculty will enjoy themselves and participate in a school's intramural program.

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